

men" means anything it means a fellowship in which spiritual unity, after the New Testament pattern, is at least beginning to be realised. If it is indeed to find even a measure of realisation, the pure Word of God must be preached, the Sacraments *duly* administered. If there is any validity in the contentions of this paper Evangelism is therefore both a *sine qua non*, and an effective instrument, of Evangelical unity.

The Fruits of Evangelism Intercommunion

THE RIGHT REV. BISHOP A. W. T. PEROWNE, D.D.

I HAVE been allowed by the Chairman to take the subject of Intercommunion without too much reference to its being a fruit of Evangelism. For to tell the truth I am still in doubt as to whether the one is the outcome of the other that way round, though I believe that Evangelism is at least an outcome of Intercommunion, or could be made so if Intercommunion were more common. But I must be fair to those who chose the subjects. I have come across the following statement in Hugh Martin's quite excellent little book entitled "*Christian Reunion—a plea for action*"; "It is a fact never to be forgotten that the S. India Scheme, the most daring of all unity Schemes, had its birth in a joint evangelistic scheme." That of course is not strictly an illustration of Intercommunion being a fruit of Evangelism, but it does illustrate the fact that Evangelistic effort is bound to result in a desire for closer fellowship all round and Intercommunion is involved in that desire inevitably. The only movement that I personally know of which might be said to be an instance of Intercommunion being a fruit of Evangelism is the experiment made by Canon Guy Rogers at the Parish Church in Birmingham, where after some years of joint effort in Evangelism, with occasional open communion according to the Anglican rite, reciprocal Intercommunion was started and seems to have taken place with very little opposition. In "*The Church and the 20th Century*" a full account is given of this experiment (pp. 181-2) and I take this paragraph from Canon Guy Rogers' own statement "No greater testimony to the value of careful preparation through a period of years and to the wisdom of the policy that sacramental fellowship is something to be earned, could be found than the quiet acceptance of this service by the religious community of Birmingham as something really guided and inspired by the Spirit of God."

That Intercommunion ought to be a fruit of joint Evangelism, I take it we should all desiderate. And I propose now to examine the actual situation as it exists to-day, and see what it is which is holding back a forward movement in that direction—and what we as Evangelicals can do to remove obstacles and clear the ground for such action as our Free Church brethren think is long overdue.

Let us go back to Lambeth 1920, when the Bishops produced that

Vision of the great Church awakening, *inclusive* not *exclusive* any longer, "gathering into its fellowship all who profess and call themselves Christians, within whose visible unity all the treasures of faith and order, bequeathed as a heritage by the past to the present, shall be possessed in common and made serviceable to the whole Body of Christ."

Now note this particularly—I quote from the Lambeth Report 1930 p. 116, "In laying this emphasis on (Episcopacy) our own heritage, we emphatically declare that we do not call in question the spiritual reality of the ministries now exercised in non-episcopal communions. On the contrary, we reiterate the declaration of the Conference of 1920 that 'these ministries have been manifestly blessed, and owned by the Holy Spirit as effective means of grace.'" To this may be added the statement of the Lambeth Committee of Anglicans and Free Churchmen appointed after the 1920 Conference, and of which both Archbishops Lang and Temple were members. "It seems to be in accordance with the L. Appeal to say, as we are prepared to say, that the ministries we have in view in this memorandum—ministries which imply a sincere intention to preach Christ's Word and administer the Sacraments as Christ has ordained and to which authority so to do has been solemnly given by the Churches concerned—are real ministries of Christ's Word and Sacraments in the Universal Church." Dr. Carnegie Simpson says that this is the most momentous declaration the Church of England has ever made.

Having gone so far, it was confidently expected that a further step would have been taken, and that a measure of real Union, such as that contemplated in the S. India Scheme, or of Intercommunion with our Free Church brothers would have followed, but no such step has in fact been taken. A grudging permission is given to any Bishop, especially in the Mission Field—and then only in very special conditions—to allow 'open' Communion and some reciprocal action, in the following terms, "The Bishops of the Anglican Committee will not question the action of a Bishop who may in his discretion so exercised sanction an exception to the general rule in special areas, where the ministrations of an Anglican Church are not available for long periods of time, or without travelling great distances, or may give permission that baptized communicant members of Churches not in communion with our own should be encouraged to communicate in Anglican Churches when the ministrations of their own Church are not available or in other temporary and special circumstances."

It would surely *seem* as if the Bishops were trying to shuffle out of the admissions already made, with regard to the validity of the Free Church ministries. Even that small concession is left to the individual Bishop to act upon or not as he may think fit! The Bishop of Derby, in whose Diocese Swanwick is situated, went so far in the other direction as to refuse an open Communion at the Student Christian Movement Conference—a step which I heard Dr. Raven recently declare to have put back the cause of Reunion twenty years.

There are two special points I would make here. (1) The Anglican representatives in the Lambeth Conversations made a statement which is historically incorrect when they said "We regard this rule of Episcopal Ordination as much more than a mere rule of internal discipline.

It embodies principles to which the Anglican Church has *throughout its history adhered*, and which contribute to the special position which it claims to hold in the Christian Church." This is not quite true.

In the 17th Century men who had been ordained by Presbyterians abroad were allowed to hold benefices after the Restoration—and from that day to this there has been a succession of Bishops and Theologians who held that Episcopacy is not of the essence of a Church.

Dr. Hunkin says "It is historically certain that the Church of England while deliberately and on various grounds retaining the historical episcopate does not unchurch nor deny the validity of the ministries of other Christians merely because they are without them ; and further in times of transition and in special circumstances certain *temporary* deviations from what has been regarded as the norm have been admitted."

Surely if our Church did not lose its Catholicity by allowing an irregular ministry for a time in the 17th Century, why should there be such danger of de-Catholicizing it in the 20th Century if for a certain time, for a definite purpose, and under certain conditions during the interim period before all are episcopally ordained, when a Union Scheme is in being, the existence of non-episcopal ministers side by side with our own should be tolerated, and themselves recognised as real ministers of the Universal Church, and not merely in and "for their own several spheres?" If this could be conceded by those who are holding up the S. India Scheme, that great experiment could be tried out there, while the fact that all fresh ordinations are to be episcopal would secure the Catholic Order which might otherwise be imperilled. The whole S. India Scheme is in jeopardy of being jettisoned, and the acceptance of Episcopacy as the norm for the future United Church in S. India endangered because of the rigidity of some of those who profess great keenness for Reunion, but are in fact the chief stumbling blocks.

(2) *And my second point* in this connection is this. In another of their statements I feel sure that there is a confusion of thought in an important paragraph of the 1930 L. Conference Report. It is in effect demanded therein that Inter-Communion should be regarded as the goal of Reunion projects and not a means towards Reunion. Remember, they have reiterated that these Free Church ministries are real, and spiritually efficacious.

The Free Church negotiators of the S. India scheme are leaders of the Communion desiring Union with us : yet this is how they are summarily dismissed, "We cannot regard the maintenance of separately organised Churches as a matter indifferent or unimportant. The will and the intention to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the Body of Christ must of necessity underlie all its organisation ; and where that unity has been broken, the earnest desire to restore union makes possible a recognition by the Church of ministries which in separation must stand on a different footing. The will and intention of Christians to perpetuate separately organised Churches makes it inconsistent in principle for them to come before our Lord to be united as one Body by the Sacrament of His own Body and Blood. The general rule of our Church must *therefore* be held to exclude indiscriminate intercommunion or any such intercommunion as expresses acquiescence in the continuance of separately organised

churches . . . From *what has been said* it will be evident why we hold as a general principle that Intercommunion should be the goal of, rather than a means to, the restoration of union." It is certainly to me a *non sequitur* !

On the contrary I should have thought that the very fact that these Communion are discussing with us schemes of re-union would at once render them most fit to partake with us of the Body and Blood of our Lord : because that shews that they do not wish to maintain their separate lives ; and again, surely there is no suggestion anywhere on the part of those who want re-union that they would countenance indiscriminate intercommunion. They implicitly lay down two conditions, both of which are fulfilled.

It is rather sad work following the reasoning and the conclusions of the Bishops in their treatment of the whole subject in 1930, and many, both Anglican and Free Churchmen, have regarded the 1930 Report and Resolutions as distinctly retrograde. Let me here, therefore take respectful leave of the Bishops, and give some further considerations which may help to the setting forth of a practical programme.

As a mere matter of fact it has been found that Intercommunion is quite certainly a *means* towards Reunion. Dr. CARNEGIE SIMPSON has put it on record that had it not been that Intercommunion had been freely practised there would not have been the ghost of a chance of the Presbyterian Union in Scotland.

Dr. HENSLEY HENSON in his book "Re-union and Intercommunion," is surely right when he says "Intercommunion is the *necessary expression* of full recognition (of each other's ministries) and therefore is the true preliminary to any useful discussion of corporate union. When the churches have entered into the religious covenant of Christian fellowship, of which the common reception of the Holy Communion is the appointed symbol, then they can discuss without suspicion or humiliation the further questions whether they should or should not merge their separate organisations. The fatal defect of the L. Conference Resolution consists of the disregard of this natural and indisputable order. In making intercommunion follow corporate re-union instead of leading up to it, they destroy the possibility of any equal treatment of non Episcopal Churches, and sterilize their negotiations in advance."

Dr. INGE in his "Present Discontents" in answer to the question which he asks, "Is there nothing to be done?" says, "Yes, the most important thing, Intercommunion. It needs no legislation : it cannot be stopped as something illegal and intolerable. It certainly may be distasteful to many Anglicans but it is actually allowed as a special measure by the Lambeth Conference in certain circumstances, and with great safeguards, and it would clearly seem to be according to the mind of Christ, which is sufficient warrant for our following His lead." It is a precarious argument, I know, claiming to know the mind of Christ better than one's opponents : but let these considerations have their weight with us as we make that claim. (1) It is now almost universally conceded that Christ laid down no one single method of securing a valid ministry in His Church. (2) It is a fact, though not as well known as it ought to be, that there is no real obstacle to

complete union with the main Free Churches on the score of the *Common Faith* we all hold alike. That was shewn at Lausanne, at Jerusalem, and at Edinburgh in 1937. Are we, as Evangelicals, to allow our Anglican Church friends to equate order with Faith? (3) It is a fact that apart from this ill-founded claim to the "Apostolic Succession" there is really no other great obstacle in the way of Home Re-union. (4) There is a tremendous call from the Mission Field to close our ranks and present a united front to Heathenism, to Materialism, to a new Paganism in so-called Christian Europe. At Tambaram, though re-union was not on the programme as a subject, it could not be prevented from dominating the whole atmosphere. This is what the younger Churches said in their appeal to the Older Churches—"we appeal with all the fervour we possess to the Missionary Societies and Boards, and to the responsible authorities of the older Churches to take this matter seriously to heart, to labour with the Churches in the Mission Field to achieve this union, to support and encourage us in all efforts to put an end to the scandalous effects of our divisions, and to lead us in the paths of union: the union for which our Lord prayed, through which the world will indeed believe in the Divine Mission of the Son our Lord Jesus Christ." The refusal to take the decisive step comes from I believe a comparatively small though extremely vocal section of the Anglo-Catholics—but they have neither Scripture nor Church history on their side. (4) The cry is raised that there are no short cuts to re-union, when we have been come to a point after fifty years of talk, discussion and resolutions not acted on—when, if some forward step is not taken negotiations will be broken off, as they have practically been in the case of our approach to the Presbyterian Church of Scotland, because we will not implement that statement about our acknowledging the Free Church ministries as real and valid. (5) I for one simply cannot believe that God's grace is less efficacious when ministered to me through the hands of Dr. Garvie than it is when ministered to me by a young man ordained last Trinity by laying on of hands of a Bishop. (6) By their fruits ye shall know them. Hugh Martin puts this issue very plainly when he says "The Free Churches have spread over the world. They have preserved the faith of the Apostles, and shewn the fruits of the Spirit. It is a fact that the grace of God is not fettered to Episcopacy. There is no evidence—I feel almost ashamed of arguing in such a way, but the arguments of some "Catholic" writers demand it—that God even prefers Episcopacy. It is singularly unimpressive to be told that the Churches of the Lutheran and Reformed traditions are maintained by the "uncovenanted mercies" of God—on sufferance as it were. If God acts at all, how can it be proper to suggest that His action can be "invalid" or "irregular"? I make bold to claim that re-union is in accord with the mind of Christ, and that Intercommunion is a real *means* to that end. When we ourselves, with all our differences within the Church of England are preparing a joint Mission or other Evangelistic effort in parish or Deanery or Diocese, our first and natural impulse is to assemble together at a service of Holy Communion, where we realise our fellowship and oneness in Christ. It really seems monstrous that we should be prevented from widening the fellowship and deepening the inspiration which seem to be inseparable

from that service because of what I must needs call a secondary cause—a point of order, an unproven theory which the whole Evangelical section of the Church of England repudiates. They refuse to believe that grace and valid sacraments depend on Apostolic Succession. That theory breaks down at the very beginning of the Church's history. St. Paul himself was not made an Apostle by Episcopal ordination—a point which is fatal to the theories of those who maintain its necessity.

What then can we do to further Intercommunion, and so give fresh impetus to our Evangelistic effort?

1. We must *educate our people*. It is quite lamentable to find amongst our lay folk—yes, and even our Country Clergy—such strong prejudice against schemes of re-union, or at least a passive indifference. We must help them to realise not merely the waste caused by our present differences, but the *sin* of perpetuating the divisions which keep us in separate camps and destroy the witness we might give in unified schemes of Evangelistic effort.

2. Why cannot more of us copy the example of Birmingham Parish Church, and work towards Intercommunion deliberately as a means of cementing the unity already existing in joint effort in social welfare and Evangelism. It is more than likely that such a line of action may be dubbed as disloyal, or illegal, or precipitate. But, N.B., nearly all forward progress in the Church of England has come from such bold moves. We should never, I imagine, have been able to welcome to our pulpits Free Church ministers, as now we do almost as a matter of course even in our Cathedrals, unless Hensley Henson had braved Gore's wrath and edict of excommunication, and preached in Carr's Lane Chapel at the invitation of Dr. Jowett! The United Communion on the Mount of Olives on Easter Day, 1927, has not been repeated at Tambaram, but it is impossible to think that the Spirit of Fellowship can long be dammed up, and pour itself through every other channel and ignore the Sacrament of fellowship itself. I have myself taken part in a Holy Communion Service on the Mount of Olives when a mixed party of S.S. Teachers from East and West were gathered there, and it seemed inevitable and quite natural to cement our fellowship in such a service.

3. Our position as the "Bridge" Church lays upon us the obligation of going forward. The very fact that in the Church of England we have solved in part at any rate the problem of men in the same Communion holding such different views of episcopacy, the ministry, the real Presence in the Sacrament of Holy Communion, the grace of Baptism, and the grace of Confirmation, calls us to the responsibility of acting as the Bridge Church, and teaching our people more than they certainly now know about its history, its ethos, its power to adapt itself to circumstances as our political constitution has adapted itself to times and circumstances in true English fashion.

4. We must be more courageous in our witness to Evangelical truth than we sometimes have been. I do not know how many Clergy there are still in England who call themselves Evangelical. In 1934, 1,200 of the A.E.G.M., passed a resolution on this subject of Intercommunion, of which some of us are hardly aware, which ought to have been proclaimed from the housetops, "That this Conference of the A.E.G.M. records its conviction that the time has come when

further steps should be taken in the matter of Intercommunion between the Church of England and those non-Episcopal Churches whose ministries have already been acknowledged to be real ministries of Christ's Word and Sacraments in the Universal Church, and respectfully urges the Bishops to foster and regulate such Intercommunion as may seem desirable in the general interests of Re-union." We might well endorse that Resolution to-day as a beginning.

5. And last, but not least, we must cultivate more close relations with our Free Church leaders wherever we may find them, and discover what they are thinking, and how we may work with them without a trace of condescension in our manner, and with humble acceptance of their help. It is amazing how long they have borne with us and our assumption that in some way their ministry is incomplete and spiritually invalid, notwithstanding the fruits they can show for their work, and notwithstanding that we use with real gratitude and profit their writings and their commentaries. We are one in Christ in spite of our divisions. At the 1937 Edinburgh Conference the sense of our unity became more and more impressive as the days went by, even through all the acknowledged diversity, culminating in the great affirmation of unity solemnly made in St. Giles Cathedral. "We could not be seeking union if we did not already possess unity," said the Chairman, Dr. Temple. The same assurance came to the conference at Madras. "This is not just 'feelings.' It is of the very stuff of reality. It is unreal to deny such unity its one expression at the Table of the one Lord." H. Martin, *p.* 133.

Let me close with some sentences from Canon Guy Rogers article in favour of intercommunion in "The Church and the 20th Century", in which he gathers up phrases from the report itself verbatim: "If we 'acknowledge all those who believe in one Lord Jesus Christ, and have been baptized into the Name of the Holy Trinity as sharing with us membership in the Universal Church'; if 'we believe that God wills fellowship'; if 'we think of the great non-Episcopal Communion, standing for rich elements of truth, liberty and life which might otherwise have been obscured or neglected'; if we admit that it is 'the Holy Spirit of God whose call led us all to our several ministries, and whose Power enables us to perform them'; if 'the times call us to an adventure of goodwill'; there might well seem to be a case for intercommunion without delay". . . "What doth hinder that these Churches should receive the Holy Communion together? as a means of fulfilling and deepening our Evangelistic efforts."